

CLAIMS

What is claimed and desired to be covered by Letters Patent is as follows:

1. A method of controlling a person's weight comprising:
 - a) providing an electronic weight-related data gathering device, such as an electronic scale, in a convenient location, such as in a person's home;
 - b) simulating membership in a slimming club for the person by
 - (1) electrically connecting the electronic weight-related data gathering device to a telephone system,
 - (2) providing the electronic weight-related data gathering device with a dialing modem,
 - (3) providing the electronic weight-related data gathering device with a "send" circuit,
 - (4) programming the dialing modem to dial a prescribed telephone number when the "send" circuit is activated,
 - (5) providing a weight-related data reading circuit in the electronic weight-related data gathering device,
 - (6) selecting weight-related data from the group consisting of body weight and body fat index,

- (7) generating and sending a weight-related data signal corresponding to the weight-related data from the electronic weight-related data gathering device via the telephone system when the "send" circuit is activated,
- (8) displaying weight-related data on the electronic weight-related data gathering device,
- (9) providing a data server and connecting the data server to the electronic weight-related data gathering device to receive weight-related data signals from the electronic weight-related data gathering device,
- (10) logging the electronic weight-related data gathering device onto the data server,
- (11) sending weight-related data signals from the electronic weight-related data gathering device via the telephone connection to the data server,
- (12) generating communication status signals on the electronic weight-related data gathering device which indicate whether a telephone connection has been made, if a telephone connection is possible, if weight-related

data signals are sent, if a dial tone is sensed, if telephone line is busy, if the data server is busy, if the data server is not responding,

- (13) providing a central computer system,
- (14) locating the central computer system remote from the person,
- (15) providing a supervising group leader terminal,
- (16) locating the supervising group leader terminal remote from the person,
- (17) making and keeping a unique identifier associated with the person at the central computer system and using the unique identifier to associate records and data with the person at the central computer system,
- (18) connecting the central computer system to the Internet,
- (19) at the central computer system, receiving weight-related data signals sent from the electronic weight-related data gathering device via telephone connection and making and keeping a record of this data on a database,

- (20) making a record of the person's weight in the central computer system,
- (21) making and keeping a record of the person's weight goals in the central computer system,
- (22) making and keeping a record of special dates associated with the person in the central computer system,
- (23) making and keeping a record of an initial weight associated with the person in the central computer system,
- (24) making and keeping a record of body fat and body fat index associated with the person in the central computer system,
- (25) making and keeping a record of current weight associated with the person in the central computer system,
- (26) making and keeping a record of rate of weight loss associated with the person in the central computer system,
- (27) making and keeping a record of desired weight-in frequency associated with the person in the central computer system,
- (28) making and keeping a record of family data associated with the person in the central

- computer system,
- (29) making and keeping a record of contact data associated with the person in the central computer system,
 - (30) making and keeping a record of positive reinforcement messages associated with the person in the central computer system,
 - (31) making and keeping a record of demographic data associated with the person in the central computer system,
 - (32) making and keeping a record of vacations associated with the person in the central computer system,
 - (33) making and keeping a record of holidays associated with the person in the central computer system, and
 - (34) at the central computer system, forming a reply communication signal that is associated with the person by combining the person's weight, the person's weight goals, the person's special dates, the person's vacations, the person's holidays, the person's initial weight, the person's body fat, the person's body fat index, the

- person's rate of weight loss, the person's weigh-in frequency, the person's positive reinforcement messages, and the demographic data associated with the person; and
- c) further simulating a membership in a slimming club for the person by
- (1) generating the reply communication signal from the central computer system every time a weight-related data signal is received at the central computer system from the electronic weight-related data gathering device,
 - (2) selecting a communications signal receiving device associated with the person from the group consisting of a telephone, digital television, facsimile machine, a computer or mail,
 - (3) using the communications signal receiving device, receiving the reply communication signal from the central computer system,
 - (4) if a weight-related data signal from the electronic weight-related data gathering device has not been received at the central computer system in a predetermined time interval, forming a reminder communications

signal in the central computer system in accordance with the records of the person's goals, special dates, weigh-in frequency, vacations, holidays, reinforcement messages, and rate of weight loss,

- (5) generating the reminder communications signal from the central computer system, and
- (6) using the communications signal receiving device, receiving the reminder communication signal from the central computer system .

- 2. The method as described in claim 1 further including a step of comparing the person's previous weight-related reading to a current weight-related reading and generating a compatibility signal within the electronic weight-related data gathering device when the current weight-related reading differs from the previous weight-related reading by more than a predetermined amount.

3. The method as described in claim 2 further including a step of displaying a message on the electronic weight-related data gathering device requesting the user to confirm his/her identity.
4. The method as described in claim 1 further including monitoring stress level-related data on the person.
5. The method as described in claim 4 wherein the stress level-related data includes heart rate.
6. The method as described in claim 4 wherein the stress level-related data includes electrocardiogram (ECG) data.
7. A method of controlling a person's weight comprising:
 - a) simulating membership in a slimming club for the person by placing a weight-related reading device in convenient location, such as in the person's home, generating weight-related data signals from the weight-related reading device, placing a central computer system remote from the location in which is located the weight-related reading device, using a telephone

- connection to connect the weight-related reading device to the central computer system, receiving the weight-related data signals at the central computer system, and storing information associated with the person in the central computer system; and
- b) further simulating membership in a slimming club for the person by generating a reply communications signal from the central computer system every time a weight-related data signal is received at the central computer system from the weight-related reading, providing a communications signal receiving device for the person, using the communications signal receiving device, receiving the reply communication signal from the central computer system, forming a reminder communications signal at the central computer system, if a signal from the weight-related reading device has not been received at the central computer system in a predetermined time interval generating the reminder communications signal from the central computer system, and using the communications signal receiving device, receiving the reminder

communication signal from the central computer system.

8. The method as described in claim 7 further including a step of the person setting the predetermined time interval.
9. The method as described in claim 7 further including monitoring stress level-related data on the person.